



Rape and Sexual Assault in Massachusetts, 2003-2004

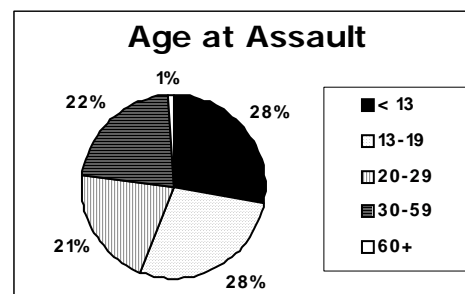
Incidents Reported by Survivors Who Seek Help from Rape Crisis Programs

In Massachusetts an estimated 22% of women and 7% of men experience sexual assault in their lifetime.ⁱ To respond to the needs of survivors of sexual violence, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) funded 18 local Rape Crisis Centers (RCCs) across Massachusetts, as well as a statewide Spanish language helpline. The information below is a summary of data collected by these programs over a one-year time period.

From July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004, trained rape crisis counselors from MDPH-funded RCCs and the statewide Spanish language helpline **responded to over 11,100 hotline calls**; over 8,200 of these were from survivors.ⁱⁱ In addition to information on the number of hotline calls received, counselors also collect information on incidents of sexual assault that are reported to them during the course of providing services. RCCs and the statewide Spanish language helpline received 2,400 unduplicated reports of sexual assault. Of these reports, 1,779 were made directly by survivors. The data presented below details these reports from survivors only.

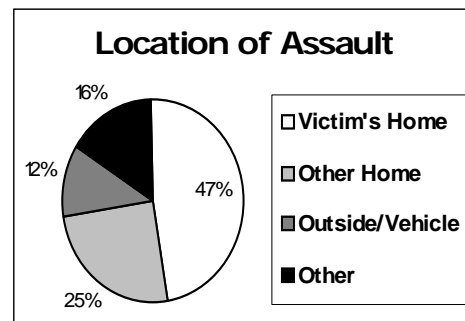
Among the survivors who reported to RCCs and the Spanish language helpline:

- **92%** were female;
- Age at the time of assault ranged from 1 year to over 60 years;ⁱⁱⁱ
- **45%** of victims reported **injuries** in addition to the sexual assault, of 51% who provided information on additional injuries;
- **One third reported** having a **disability**, of 51% who provided information on disability status.



Circumstances of the assaults:

- **Weapons** were reported used in 12% of assaults, of 47% in which information was provided on weapon use;
- **Almost half** of sexual assaults reported **occurred at the victim's home**, of 68% in which information was provided on location of assault.



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Bureau of Family and Community Health ♦ Division of Violence and Injury Prevention

250 Washington Street, Fourth Floor, Boston, MA 02108 (617) 624-5463, (617) 624-5992 tty

<http://www.mass.gov/dph/fch/violence/>

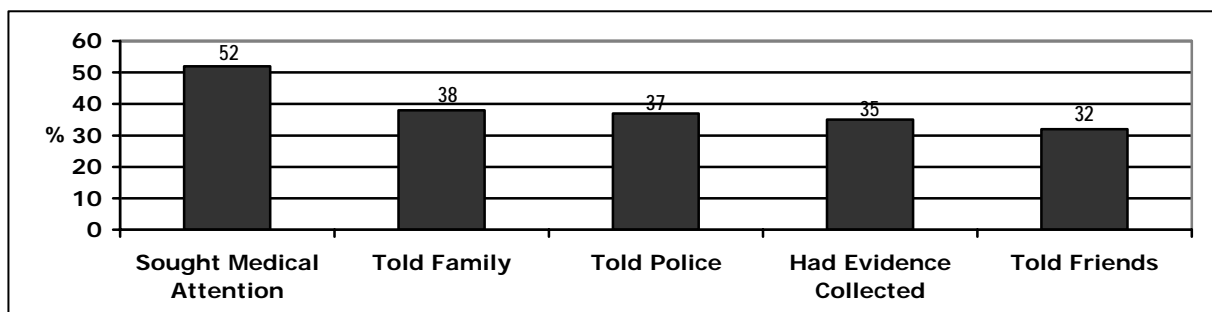
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Sexual Assault Perpetrators:

- **Someone known to the victim** committed over **90%** of reported assaults against survivors 13 years of age and older, and **97%** of reported assaults to survivors under 13 years old, of 79% of assaults in which information was provided on both victim age and perpetrator relationship at time of assault;
- **Current and former partners, dates, and boyfriend/girlfriends** committed over one third of reported assaults against survivors 13 years of age and older, while **parents, caretakers, siblings and other relatives** committed almost three-fourths of reported assaults against children under 13 years, of 79% of assaults in which information was provided on both age and perpetrator;
- **Men committed over 94% of reported sexual assaults**, of 79% of assaults in which information was provided on perpetrator gender.

Survivors who also sought other help:

- Some survivors **told family, friends, and/or police**, of 80% who provided information on reporting to others;
- **52%** sought **medical attention**, of 72% who provided information on medical attention;
- **35%** had **forensic evidence collected**, of 71% who provided information on evidence collection.



If you need help please contact your local rape crisis center. See attached list for resources.

Data Collection and Limitations

Data contained in this report are reported to Rape Crisis Centers by survivors. Providing support and information to survivors is a priority of RCC counselors, over data completion. For more information about sexual assault-related data, please see the Sexual Assault Prevention and Survivor Services website at: <http://www.mass.gov/dph/fch/sapss/>.

ⁱ Commonwealth of Massachusetts. A Profile of Health Among Massachusetts Adults, 2003. Boston, Massachusetts: Health Survey Program, Center for Health Information, Statistics, Research, and Evaluation, Department of Public Health.

ⁱⁱ Hotline services are provided for survivors, family and friends, and professionals for support and resource referrals. Survivors may call the Hotline multiple times or may prefer to discuss the assault in face-to-face counseling rather than on the hotline, thus the number of calls to the hotline is a measure of service use and is not a measure of sexual assault incidents reported to DPH-funded RCCs.

ⁱⁱⁱ Many survivors do not contact RCCs immediately after they are assaulted but may seek services later in life. Data on age at time of assault is collected in order to illustrate the demographics of victims as accurately as possible.

* In FY04, funding cuts to local rape crisis centers resulted in reductions to services at some centers. Please check with your local program for currently available services.

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